

REMARKS

Claims 2, 4, 5, 7-10, 12 and 13 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 2, 4, 5, 7-10, 12 and 13 are amended, and claims 1, 3, 6 and 11 are canceled. Claims 2, 5, 7-10, 12 and 13 are amended to further distinguish over the references cited in the Office Action. Claim 4 is amended to overcome a claim objection for alleged informalities and to amend claim dependency. Claims 9 and 10 are amended to overcome a claim rejection under 35 U.S.C. §101.

No new matter is added to the application by this Amendment. Support for the language added to claims 2, 4, 5, 7-10, 12 and 13 can be found within canceled claims 3 and 11 as originally filed and in the specification at page 11, line 6 – page 13, line 8 and page 14, line 13.

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

I. Information Disclosure Statement

Applicants filed an Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) on January 15, 2004 with the present application. The attached receipt dated January 15, 2004 by the Patent Office confirms that the January 15, 2004 IDS including PTO Form-1449 was received by the Patent Office. However, an initialed copy of the PTO-Form 1449 from the January 15, 2004 IDS was not included with the February 16, 2007 Office Action received from the Patent Office.

Thus, Applicants have enclosed, for the convenience of the Patent Office, a copy of the PTO Form-1449 from the January 15, 2004 IDS. Applicants request that the Examiner initial each reference in the attached PTO Form-1449 indicating that those references have been considered by the Patent Office, and return the same with the next communication.

II. Claim Objection

Claim 4 was objected to for alleged informalities. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 4 has been amended to overcome the claim objection. Therefore, the rejection is moot with respect to this claim.

Thus, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection.

II. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §101

Claims 9 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §101 for allegedly being directed to non-statutory subject matter. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 9 and 10 have been amended to be directed to a computer-readable medium which stores a program causing a computer to function. Claim 11, directed to a computer-readable information storage medium, is canceled. Moreover, the title is amended to remove “program” therefrom and to replace “information storage medium” with “computer-readable medium” to correspond to the subject matter of claims 9 and 10.

Thus, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §101.

III. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102(e)

Claims 1, 2 and 5-27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. US 2003/0081181 to Noguchi.* This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants appreciate the indication that claims 3 and 4 contain allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim. By this Amendment, independent claims 2, 5, 7-10, 12 and 13 have been amended to include the features of allowable claim 3, and claim 3 is canceled.

* The Patent Office indicates that claims 1-27 are pending and further rejects claims 1, 2 and 5-27 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e). However, Applicants point out that the present application, prior to this amendment, only included claims 1-13.

Thus, for at least these reasons, independent claims 2, 5, 7-10, 12 and 13, and dependent claim 4, are allowable.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) is respectfully requested.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 2, 4, 5, 7-10, 12 and 13 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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JAO:BCA/rav

Attachment:

Copy of PTO-Form 1449 from January 15, 2004 Information Disclosure Statement
Copy of Filing Receipt

Date: May 16, 2007

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